



FLORIDA SENATOR  
**JOSÉ JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**  
DISTRICT 37



# THE RODRÍGUEZ REPORT

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## In Review - 2017 Legislative Session

*Dear friends and neighbors,*

It is an honor to represent the residents of District 37. I hope that my work this during this legislative session will make you proud.

Please reach out to me or my office if you have any questions or if there are any issues that I or my office can help with. My email address is [rodriguez.jose.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:rodriguez.jose.web@flsenate.gov), my office phone number is 305-854-0365, and my office is located at 2100 Coral Way, Suite 505.



*Sen. Rodriguez talking to condominium owners about condominium reform*



*Sen. Rodriguez presenting SB 766, a bill to stop credit card skimmers*



*Sen. Rodriguez speaking to participants at the March for Science in Miami*

This year I passed a public safety bill in the Senate working with Rep. Asencio (D-Miami) in the House of Representatives. **SB 766/HB 343 will make it a crime to possess a card skimmer, a device used to steal credit card information at ATMs and gas pumps.** The bill now awaits the Governor's signature before becoming law.

After years trying to reform Florida's condominium law, I am proud to announce that we unanimously passed HB 1237/SB 1682 to address longstanding issues faced by condominium owners. I co-sponsored it and worked closely with House sponsor Rep. Diaz (R-Westchester) and Sen. Garcia (R-Hialeah) to pass this bill. **This condominium reform bill prohibits conflicts of interest, creates greater transparency and access to records, and clarifies the application of criminal penalties.**

**SB 10** by Sen. Bradley (R-Fleming Island) is an historic bill that I supported. It creates a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee to stop toxic discharges and to help restore the natural flow of water to the Everglades. I am proud to have worked on the bill's passage, particularly on economic development and job retraining provisions included in the bill.

This year, I successfully advocated for many critical infrastructure projects in District 37 funded in this year's budget. **The most important of these is funding for the City of Miami's Sea Level Rise Stormwater Master Plan, designed to help the city combat sea level rise.**



@JoseJavierJJR

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*Sen. Rodriguez meeting with parents and kids advocating for recess in public schools*



*Sen. Rodriguez meeting with Miami Dade College officials visiting Tallahassee*



*Sen. Rodriguez presenting local funding requests*



*Sen. Rodriguez meeting with officials from District 37 during Session*

## Improving our school system

I am very disappointed that HB 7069, a 278-page education bill, passed on a narrow last minute vote. I believe it will be disastrous for our public schools. Approved without taking into consideration complaints of teachers in the State, and negotiated behind closed doors, the bill dramatically expands funds diverted away from traditional public schools and strips local districts of spending flexibility.

This Session the Legislature passed modest education reform. While I support addressing the over-testing issues in our schools, and filed legislation that went further (SB 1280), I believe the reforms did not go far enough. I'm happy the bill mandates 20 minutes of recess daily for all elementary school students and reduces testing in some subject areas. I will continue to advocate for our students by addressing problems in over-testing.

## Protecting consumers and our community

I strongly fought efforts to pass a bill (SB 1238) that would have allowed FPL to conduct fracking in other states and pass the costs of these risky ventures onto customers. Fracking is a process of extracting oil and gas associated with ground and water contamination.

Another bill I fought (SB 1048), would have undone a court decision requiring FPL to abide by local environmental and zoning laws in building 110-foot transmission towers through our community. It was also defeated.



This session passed with no new statewide gambling agreement after the various special interests could not work out their issues. **Throughout negotiations, I have stood firm in opposing a giant new casino in downtown Miami because I believe it would hurt our economy and quality of life.**

### Defending the environment

Two bills I filed are worth mentioning. Though they didn't pass, both were vigorously debated in committee and I am optimistic for the future. **SB 162 would have allowed coastal communities to ban or regulate plastic bags. SB 456 would have allowed property owners to generate solar energy and then share or sell it to tenants on their own property.**

### Ensuring proper use of taxpayer dollars

I was proud to work on SB 1770 with Sen. Lee (R-Tampa). **The bill would have reformed community redevelopment agencies (CRAs).** Several investigations and reports have detailed abuses of taxpayer money in CRAs. The bill would have ensured the agencies' focused on their intended purpose: to improve areas with high levels of poverty and blight. Though unsuccessful I hope to continue this work.

I also worked to protect taxpayer dollars in Enterprise Florida, a public-private agency that among other things uses taxpayer dollars to subsidize private companies for job creation. **Language I have worked on for several years requires the incentive program to raise half the funds from private sources rather than relying on approximately 90% public money.** These provisions were accepted into HB 5501 which was passed by the Legislature.



*Sen. Rodriguez advocating solar energy on a panel at Miami Dade College*



*Sen. Rodriguez discussing legislation with a colleague*



*Sen. Rodriguez discussing higher education funding with FIU student leadership*



*Sen. Rodriguez discussing gun safety legislation with a colleague*



*Sen. Rodriguez debating legislation with a colleague*



*Sen. Rodriguez meeting with Cutler Bay officials*



*Sen. Rodriguez speaking at the 2017 Community Summit on Children*



*Sen. Rodriguez and his family on the first day of the 2017 Session*

## Important bills that did not pass

On November 2016, 71.3 % of Florida voters approved the Florida Medical Marijuana Legalization Initiative, also known as Amendment 2. The House and the Senate had different approaches on how to implement Amendment 2 and no legislation passed. **As an elected official, I am disappointed that the Legislature was not able to get an agreement reflecting the voice of the people of Florida on this important healthcare issue.**

The Legislature also attempted to address several Florida Supreme Court opinions dealing with workers compensation. **I was glad the bills did not pass because injured workers would have been in a worse situation than under current law.**

As I represent you and work on your behalf, do not hesitate to contact me if I or my office can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "José Javier Rodríguez".

State Senator José Javier Rodríguez



@JoseJavierJJR

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